

management agencies are often overwhelmed and unable to deal with all the needs of the affected communities. This program trains private citizens to provide basic emergency care for their own neighborhoods in the critical time immediately following a disaster.

The Temecula Citizen Corps has achieved such impressive results that the Department of Homeland Security considers it a standard setter for local communities. It has also won widespread praise throughout the Southern California region for its efficiency and quality of training and is inspiring many other cities and communities to follow its example. Last week, the men and women of Temecula were recognized publicly by the Secretary of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge, for the excellent program they have developed.

I am extremely proud of the City of Temecula for the dedication and effort they have invested in the Temecula Citizen Corps program. I am pleased to have had this opportunity to recognize them today and I encourage my colleagues to review their program as an example of what is possible when communities decide to take responsibility for their security needs.

#### HONORING DIANA MASON

#### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the career of my long-time friend and constituent Mrs. Diana Mason.

Diana began her career in 1963 after graduating from Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, California. As a secretary in the engineering department of the United States Steel Corporation, Diana began what would be three decades of service to US Steel. Two years after her initial employment she transferred to the Industrial Engineering Department and finally in 1967 began working at the San Francisco corporate offices as secretary to the Director of Public Relations of Western States.

Diana continued her exemplary service and in 1979 was promoted to Executive Secretary to Plant Manager and returned to Pittsburg, CA. In 1986, US Steel merged with Pohang Steel Corporation of South Korea to become USS/POSCO Industries (UPI) and Diana began working as secretary to Mr. S.H. Yo, Executive Vice President of UPI.

In 1993, Diana became responsible for bringing UPI to the forefront of the community and began her new job as Manager of Community Relations. In this position she worked closely with the people and businesses of surrounding cities—Antioch, Oakley, and Brentwood.

In addition to her work for UPI, Diana supports several outreach programs including Junior Achievement, Project Read, Choices, and the Pittsburg Seafood Festival. She is also a member of the Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club.

For three decades Diana has dedicated her career to working for US Steel and later UPI. In October 2003, Diana ended her long and successful career and I would like to take the time today to congratulate her on a job well done. I will continue to enjoy my friendship

with her and I have tremendous respect and appreciation for the work she has done on behalf of her company, its employees, and our community.

I encourage my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in acknowledging the career and dedication of Diana Mason.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY NAACP AND THE CITY OF WEST COVINA FOR COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

#### HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to commend the work of the San Gabriel Valley National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the city of West Covina for their 5th annual commemoration of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King was a visionary leader who believed and dreamed of a color-blind society in America—a place where interracial and intercultural cooperation triumphs over hatred and ignorance. He helped awaken our nation's conscience of the racial injustice directed toward millions of Americans and reaffirmed our most cherished principle—the principle that all men and women are created equal.

During the 1960s, a time of great unrest, Dr. King emphasized the importance of using non-violence to achieve social and political advancement for all people. Dr. King understood that the means of achieving your goal was as important as the goal you were trying to achieve. Although we have made great strides toward achieving greater equality and opportunity for all since his death, we as a nation and as a people are still struggling to fulfill his dream, and we must do more.

According to Coretta Scott King, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday is not only a celebration of a man who brought hope and healing to America, but it is, above all, a day of service. In honor of Dr. King, let us remember to help the less fortunate, to fight against injustice, and live up to the principle of our great country.

I commend the work of the San Gabriel Valley NAACP and the city of West Covina for organizing the 5th annual celebration to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Events like these remind us that Dr. King's fight is our fight, his dream is our dream, and that one day we will "judge a person by the content of their character and not the color of their skin." Let us keep his memory alive through our actions and deeds.

#### ADDRESSING THE RECENT "REFORM" OF THE MEDICARE SYSTEM

#### HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the consequences of the Medicare

legislation signed into law in December of last year. I must express my profound disappointment with the outcome of a process that originally promised so much hope. Throughout 2003, there was bipartisan enthusiasm and genuine momentum for change that would safeguard the Medicare system and ensure affordable prescription drugs for every American. It seemed as if we might finally make some real progress. Sadly, the Congress—under relentless pressure from the White House and the pharmaceutical industry—squandered the opportunity of a generation.

Some have characterized the new law as "better than nothing." Nothing could be further from the truth. This was bad legislation, enacted in an underhanded manner. It is extremely expensive, but does little to actually bring down out-of-pocket consumer costs. The consensus for reform was shredded in favor of a complicated system designed by lobbyists for the pharmaceutical industry.

Only a handful of congressional Members even saw the final 700-page document, made available barely an hour before floor debate. Although the bill was initially defeated after the normal 15-minute voting period, the Speaker simply refused to gavel the vote to a close. After more than three excruciating hours—the longest vote ever in the history of the U.S. Congress—he finally closed the vote only after enough arms were twisted to change the outcome. Even then, at 6 a.m. that Saturday in November, the bill passed by only five votes. And with the bill now law, the strongest defense from proponents seems to be: "Don't worry, no one has to sign up, it's all voluntary." That's hardly reassuring for millions of seniors in urgent need.

Because this "reform" does far more to inflate the Federal budget than to help senior citizens or the Medicare program, I voted against it. There is so much wrong with this package that it's hard to know where to begin.

First, it doesn't offer much real prescription drug coverage. To enroll in the new Part D coverage, you must pay an estimated \$35 monthly premium—and still meet an annual \$250 deductible. Up to \$2,200, you also pay 25 percent of the drug costs. After that, you face a coverage gap (the infamous "doughnut hole") where you pay 100 percent until costs reach \$5,044. In other words, older and disabled people will have to spend nearly \$4,000 for the first \$5,000 of annual coverage—paying nearly 80 percent of their prescription drug costs to get any substantial benefit at all. And, these are only first-year estimates; the out-of-pocket cost is expected to rise every year thereafter.

Incredibly, however, if you participate in the new prescription drug benefit, you will not be permitted to buy any kind of supplemental insurance (like Medigap) to cover your share of the costs. Medicare will cover only drugs on a list of preferred "formulary" medicines; and drugs purchased outside the list will not be counted toward your deductible.

On top of all that, the new benefit doesn't even take effect until the year 2006, more than 2 years away. This fact was scarcely mentioned by the bill's proponents during the congressional debate. Seniors need help now, not cynical and uncertain promises for later.

In the meantime, the interim discount cards paraded by the administration promise only small savings for the consumer—if you can figure out how they work. It's not clear who